Memorial Sermon

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John H. Rawlins
Post No. 125

J. K. Gowdy, D. D.

MEMORIAL SERMON

DELIVERED BEFORE

John A. Rawlins Post No. 126, Department of Minnesota, G. A. R.

ON

MEMORIAL SUNDAY, MAY 28, 1899,

BY

REV. J. B. HELWIG, D. D.,

AT THE

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA.

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Members of the John A. Rawlins Post of the Grand Army of the Republic:—

I can assure you of a most hearty welcome, and not only from myself but from my entire congregation to this service. And also a welcome to other Grand Army friends, members of the Presbyterian General Assembly and others who may be worshippers with us this morning.

The following letter was received from Rev. Wm. E. Moore, the permanent clerk of the General Assembly, then in the city:

My Dear Dr. Helwig:—

I am sorry to say that I find it impossible to fulfill my promise to be with you today, and share with the comrades in the hallowed services in memory of our honored dead. I hope my involuntary failure will cause you no inconvenience.

May the good Master be with you and the comrades.

WM. E. MOORE.

West Hotel,
May 28th, 1899.

There are two portions of scripture to which I will refer as containing the guiding thought for the discourse. One is found in the 22nd chapter of the Acts of the Apostles and at the 28th verse. "With a great sum obtained I this freedom." That was the reply of the Roman centurion to the Apostle Paul and referred to the freedom that was bought, not with the price of blood, but with money alone. That could be done during the

reign of Claudius, one of the Roman Emperors. The citizen of Rome who possessed that freedom could not be bought and sold as others might be. He could possess property, either by inheritance or by purchase, and he could have his own family, and they in the enjoyment also of the same privileges with himself. That is what was meant when the Roman centurion said to the Apostle Paul, "With a great sum obtained I this freedom."

My second portion of scripture is the first and second verses of the 144 Psalm. "Blessed be the Lord my strength; which teacheth my hands to war and my fingers to fight. My goodness and my fortress; my high tower and my deliverer; my shield and he in whom I trust. The truth contained in this scripture is, that whilst God is the nations' Maker he must also be the nations' trust and defender.

First, what does this memorial occasion commemorate, and which is also again observed by the loyal heart of the entire country? This memorial service followed by the decoration of the large number of graves of the loyal and fallen defenders of the nation, reminds us again of the sum that was paid for our nations life. The day reminds us again of the gathering of that storm-cloud of political sectional contention, by reason of the two conflicting systems of civilization in the same form of government, and for a period of three-score and ten years. And through all those years, a nation half slave and half free was necessarily a contradiction to itself and a constant menace to its perpetuity. This day also reminds us of the breaking of the war cloud of civil strife in the early morning of the 12th day of April,1861, at the city of Charleston, South Carolina. And hence the day reminds us again of that most marvellous uprising and commotion that thrilled every fibre of our body politic. And so the day also commemorates the calling of troops and the volunteering of armies and the rushing of these to the defense of the imperilled republic. And this day re-

minds you again of the partings from home and friends and loved ones, and on the part of many of your comrades, those also who never saw friends and loved ones and home again. And hence this day also commemorates camp life with its routine of military drill and duty and discipline. It commemorates the long and tedious and often also the hungry, the tired andthe footsore march. It commemorates picket duty under the silent stars and in the icy air of the night. It commemorates scores and hundreds of battlefields covered with wounded and dying and dead comrades. And so it also commemorates the hospital's pain and more still the southern prisons suffering. But not with malice towards any but with charity for all. The day commemorates defeats. But it also commemorates the day of final victory on the 9th of April 1865 wanting only three days of four years from the time that the morning gun at Charleston shook the Union and which we believe never would have been discharged could the sorrows and the losses, and all the results of the four years' war have been foreseen. How much therefore, my friends, this memorial day commemorates and of that which is so profoundly significant in the history, and especially as touching the life of the American Republic.

There should be no suprise therefore, at the annual loyal observance of this day. The suprise would be were it not so observed; and in the outgoing of the nation's history let the day not be forgotten. But if it should be forgotten, then, paraphrasing the language of the Psalmist. Let the right hand of the generation that forgets it lose its cunning and let its tongue cleave to the roof of its mouth when it ceases to declare its love for a country the life and the freedom of which was obtained at so great a sum. And so blessed be the Lord our strength that inspired loyal hearts and taught loyal hands and the loyal hearts of both men and women to contend for a country like this.

The language of the Psalmist means this: "Blessed be the Lord my strength which teacheth my hands to war with the sword and the shield and my fingers to fight with the bow, the arrows and especially the sling, with which I slew Goliath the giant of Gath." And the Psalmist made that declaration because he and his people were contending for a government that had a divine origin and that had for its mission a divine end in history- Hence he blessed the Divine Ruler of nations for the loyalty to such a government and the power to defend it. But God is in history still, and we have the assurance also that he has been in American history from the beginning.

In this New Western Empire God is working out the problem of popular government and christian civilization for the world. And the torch of light and life this nation is passing to other nations and now to the Islands of the seas is Liberty, and the greatest glory of a free-born people, is to transmit that freedom, first, to their own children, then to the other nations of the earth.

"And there is a spirit working in the world like to a silent
subterranean fire.
Hence, ever and anon, some cruel Monarch hurled
aghast and pale, attests its fearful ire;
Then dungeoned nations once more respire
The keen and stirring air of Liberty."

We know that it can be said, blessed is the individual whose God is the Lord. And, and so inspiration declares "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, and the people whom he hath chosen for his inheritance." And how does that language apply to our own nation? Every one of its early settlements, it is said, were always made in the name of the God of nations. The Huguenots, the protestants of France, took possession of North Carolina in the name of the God of nations. Wm. Penn, the Friend took possession of Pennsylvania in the name of the God

of the nations. The Hollander came with his sturdy Christian faith and took possession of New York state in the name of the God of the nations· And the Pilgrims came to New England with their bibles and their schools and their colleges, and there they took possession in the name of the God of the nations. And before the first gun was fired at the battle where Bunker Hill monument now stands all heads were uncovered, all hearts were bowed at the voice of prayer by the man of the God who is the Maker and the Ruler of all nations. Such was the divine origin and the sacred consecration of this nation to the God of all the nations of the earth. You know it has been said that the founders of our goevernment built better than they knew. They did, but they did not build better than God knew. They built as the Supreme Ruler ofnations intended that they should build. They did not go to Greece and Rome, republics as they were called, for the model of the American republic but they went to the bible. And did not the ancient prophets write of this land more than twenty centuries before its discovery? And their prophecies are recorded for our instruction and in order to increase our obligation and our devotion to its perpetetuity. God saw this land, for He made it and He made it for a high mission and a holy purpose. Is not this the land "between two great seas east and west?" Is this not the land "whose people were to be gathered out of all the nations of the earth?" And here they are. Is this not the land "where the stranger was also to have an inheritance?" And here he has it. Is this not "the land of unwalled towns and villages?" And it is, and the only such a great land of unwalled towns and villages on the face of the earth. Is not this "the land of broad rivers and streams," which the prophet Ezekiel saw? (Ezekiel 38 and 11.) And whilst such is the language of the prophet Ezekiel referring to the country, what is also the language of the prophet Jeremiah referring to the form of the government where he speaks of a people "who gather

themselves together and appoint unto themselves one head". A people "whose nobles shall be of themselves and whose governors shall proceed from the midst of them." Where can you find a better description of the American republic than you can in that 30th chapter of the book of Jeremiah. „A people who gather themselves together and appoint their own rulers. A people whose nobles shall be of themselves, and whose governors shall proceed from the midst of them." A Washington from the farm. A Lincoln from the forest splitting rails. A Garfield from the tow path. A Grant, the great general of modern times, from a leather store. A Sherman, the boy of all chores for Hon. Thos. Ewing senior and afterwards his son-in-law. A Phil. Sheridan from the poor hills of Perry county Ohio. And of others we might also speak. And say, first, citizen Benjamin Harrison, then General Harrison, then Senator Harrison, then President Harrison. Then, first, citizen McKinley, then Major McKinley, then Congressman McKinley, then Governor McKinley and now President McKinley. How true it is "their nobles shall be of themselves and their governors shall proceed from the midst of them." The eye that sees the sparrow fall also saw that here a great nation would in due time rise. Many of the brave men who died that the republic might live doubtless did not think or know that the roar of the battles of Gettysburg and Vicksburg and Chicamauga and around Richmond and so on all around east and west; doubtless many of those brave heroes little thought that the roar of these battles was but the echo of God's footsteps. And that Sherman's march to the sea was also the march of Him who guides the destinies of nations as he guides the destinies of men. As to the Ruler of nations let the fool answer as he will. The finger of the Divine Providence, the finger of Supreme design we believe has been pointing out and guiding on in the whole way of this nation's life and progress.

"You have seen him in the watch fires of a hundred circling
camps;
You have builded him an altar in the evening dews
and damps;
You have read his righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamp,
While his truth was marching on."

The Roman poet says, "It is sweet and glorious to die for your country." In the light of our christian civilization compare the United States with Spain, the United States with Turkey or with Mexico or with the South American states then which country would it be sweet and glorious to die for. I need not to tell you. And so it may be sweet and glorious to die for one country but not for another. And how that contrast ennobles the death of those who sacrificed their lives for a country like this And how so many of those European wars also differed in purpose from our civil war. How many of those wars there have been nothing but a fight between kings. A duel between Monarchs, and in which the people were killed and not the kings as they should have been. Napoleon once sneeringly said to a woman, "when will you women quit meddling with the politics of France." To which the reply was, "when you quit killing the heads of our families." Louis the 14th had engraved on his big guns, "This is the logic of kings," but it was dreadful logic for the people to work out. And where are the beneficial results of such wars now? Gone, all gone. But, not so here. We have become a world-wide power for civilization and liberty and we believe now also for arbitration and for peace. And not only because of the present war but because the American Union was preserved in our civil war. For had we been dismembered as a Union then, who believes that we would have the power to command the respect and the fear of the world now.

This appeared in the *Atlanta Constitution* and I

cannot pass it by at this point in the sermon.

"The new brigades are mighty fine,
The boys are brave and true,
And the gray is marchin' side by side with them that wore the blue.

I see them on the hill-tops,
They're drillin' in the glades,
But we wont forget the old boys who made the old brigades.

We wont forget the fellers,
That fought on land and sea,
That follered Stonewall Jackson or charged with old Bob Lee.

Nor Grant's and Sherman's fellers,
Their memory shall not fade,
No, we'll not forget the old boys who made the old brigades.

But they're thinnin' out the old boys,
They're gittin' few now, on the sod,
They are crossin,' crossin' over to the campin' ground of God.

I see the young boys marchin',
On hills and fields and glades,
But we wont forget the old boys who made the old brigades.

Then there is this rather remarkable similarity between the two greatest battles of modern times, the one deciding the map of Europe and the other deciding the map of America, the battle of Waterloo and the battle of Gettysburg. A similarity in the number of the men engaged. A similarity in the loss of men on either side, 16,500 killed and wounded on the Union side and 18,000 killed and wounded on the Confederate side; 6,500 men taken prisoners and missing on the Union side and 13,500

wounded and missing on the Confederate side. The two armies were depleted to the number of 54,600 men in three days, an average of over 18,000 a day. The two armies at Waterloo were depleted to the extent of 53,000 men in two days. The first day's engagement at Gettysburg ended with a victory for the Confederates. The first day's battles at Waterloo ended with a victory for the army of France. The victory of the Confederate army at Gettysburg on the first day was not followed up, and so also was the declaration of Napoleon on the evening of the first day. Everything for tomorrow! Everything for tomorrow! But tomorrow was one day too late for Napoleon at Waterloo and also too late for Lee at Gettysburg. Blucher came to the aid of Wellington on tomorrow at Waterloo, and General Meade came to the aid of Howard and Hancock and Buford and others at Gettysburg early in the morning of the tomorrow. And so tomorrow was one day too late for Napoleon, at Waterloo, and one day too late for Lee at Gettysburg. Did not God overrule in both? And so how those two momentous events in the history of the world enforce the lesson of inspiration. Say not tomorrow for we know not what may be on the morrow. But without pursuing the parallel of those two events that determined the map and the eivilizations of the world, notice this also as appropriate to the services of this day. They have no memorial days in Europe. They go not to strew the flowers of love and memory and affection upon the patriots' graves as we do. Then this contrast also, on the battlefield of Waterloo there stands but few monuments and those only in memory of some fallen members of the royal family. But what have we already upon the battlefields for the Union of this country? At Gettysburg and Chicamauga alone you can count the monuments by hundreds, commemorating the heroism of the citizen soldier who died there that his country might live. Ten times as many monuments on a single battlefield in this country as you

will find on all the battlefields of Europe. Why the contrast? This makes the difference: The monumental facts in the history of our country are facts not only for one country but for the progress of truth and liberty for all mankind.

Says the poet:

"I tell a tale, which is not new,
But O as long as truth is true;
As long as freedom sets the pace
Of progress for the human race;
As long as rights of man shall be
The heritage of you and me;
As long as unslaved thought is dear,
So long will all men pause to hear
The story of Old Glory.

I know that we are told its red
Is of the blood its heroes shed,
Its white the smoke of battle air,
Its blue the garb our soldiers wear,
But, O, believe not that its stars
Are but the bursting shells of war.

No, let us think those stars are eyes,
Eternal, God-like of the skies.
Its red the flame of loyalty,
Its white the badge of purity,
Its blue the blue of Freedom's sky,
And so we know shall never die
The story of that Old Glory."

So wrote J. Edmund Cook.

An English poet once said this of our flag:

"United States, your banner wears
Two emblems—one of fame;
Alas, the other that it bears
Reminds us of your shame.
Your standard's constellation types

White Freedom by its stars,
But what 's the meaning of those stripes?
They mean your negroes' scars."

But the soldiers for the Republic have re-written that poetry, and now it reads:

"United States, your banner wears
Two emblems—both of fame.
Your standard's constellation types
White freedom by its stars,
And what 's the meaning of those stripes?
They mean your heroes' scars."

And so that poetry shall ever hereafter read.

The monumental facts of the history of this nation are facts essentially connected with an enlightened conscience and the progress of truth and liberty for all mankind, What were the 132 battles of the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 fought for? For the freedom of conscience, for a state without a king, for a nation in which the people are the rulers. And then in the war for the life of the nation, nearly a century later than the first. What were the 153 battles in the year 1861 fought for? What were the 559 battles of 1862 fought for? What were the 624 battles of 1863 fought for? What were the 776 battles in 1864 fought for, and what were the 135 final battles, ending at Appomatox in 1865, what were those fought for? What were the 2,247 battles, large and small—think of it, 2,247 in number in the rebellion—what were these fought for? And from the beginning of the nation, in 1776, what were the 2,400 battles fought for? From the beginning to the end they were fought for the freedom of conscience and to prove that the American republic was a nation in fact. And then the latest and the hardest battles in the Civil War were fought also that every man in the Republic might be the owner of himself and not the property of another. They were fought in defense of the divine right of liberty for all men,

and not for the divine right of kings. And this nation was not a true Republic until after the surrender of the Confederate armies made the emancipation proclamation of President Lincoln a fact. Then only was this nation a true Republic. Up to that time our flag did not mean liberty for every man, woman and child in the United States. On the old Independence Bell there was engraved the declaration "Proclaim liberty to all the land and to all the inhabitants thereof." But that was not true until eighty-nine years after it was engraved there. The proclamation of President Lincoln and the victory that crowned the army for the Union, those only made that true. I know we used to make the Fourth of July eagle of liberty soar, but he always had to fly over four million men, women and children who were in the chains and bondage of slavery. We had no true Fourth of July in this country until the Fourth of July, 1865, the Fourth of July after the surrender at Appomattox. That was the first true Fourth of July of freedom to all the inhabitants of the land. Then and then only did our flag mean all that our Declaration of Independence means. Then only did every color in that flag mean liberty and to all men; then only did every thread in that flag mean individual freedom and to all alike; then only did every star and stripe and beam of light in that beautiful banner mean organized and firmly established constitutional freedom and for all. Then only did we have a flag like our country, the flag of liberty, and made so by liberty, and also for liberty to every man, woman and child in the whole land. It was said of Washington that he laid the foundations of a great Republic, but it remained for President Lincoln and the army for the Union to put on the cap stone. And now there is no other banner that carries so much hope to all the world as does the American flag.

But now also how was it all done? What was the sum that had to be paid that such freedom might be attained? Go back with me, as I know you can, and

better than I can, because you were active participants in it. Go back already thirty-eight years to 1861, and we hear the sounds of preparation for a great war. We hear the shrill music of the fife and the drum, and in the language of another: "We hear the silver notes of the heroic bugles, we see thousands of assemblages and hear the patriotic appeals of orators." And in those assemblages we see all those whose dust we now cover with flowers. There was James, and George, and William, and John, and Henry, and Charles, and Joseph, and David, and so on. Yes, the four-hundred thousand who did not return from the fields of battle, all these were in those assemblages then. "We are with them when they enlist in the great army for the Union. We see them when they part with those they love. Some are walking for the last time in quiet woody places with the maiden they adore—"fair as a star when only one is shining in the sky"—with vows of eternal love they part for the last time on the earth. Others are bending over cradles, kissing babes that are asleep. Some are receiving the blessings of old men. Some are parting with mothers who hold them and press them to their hearts again and again, and say nothing—they cannot speak for weeping, kisses and tears and tears and kisses, a divine mingling of agony and love. Some are talking the last time with wives and are endeavoring with brave words to drive from their hearts the awful sorrow. We see them part. We see the wife standing in the door with the babe. At the turn of the road a hand waves and the wife answers by holding high in her arms the child. The father is gone and he returned no more. And so we see them all as they march nobly away, under waving banners, keeping time with the wild, stirring music of war. Then we go with them one and all; we are by their side on the gory fields; in all the hospitals of pain, and on all their weary marches. We stand guard with them under the quiet stars and in the wild, howling winter's storm. We are with them in the ravines

that are running with blood, and in the furrows of the old worn out southern fields" and how many of those there were. We are with them between contending hosts, pierced by bullets, torn with shells, unable to move, wild with thirst, blessing heaven for the drenching rain, while the brave life is ebbing slowly away among the withered leaves. Yes, "dying to-night, dying to-night on the old camp ground." Then again we are at their homes when the news comes that they are dead. We see the wife and the children robbed of their only stay. We see the maiden in her first sorrow and the aged father and mother in their last grief. All that, my friends, is a part of the war and to which long columns of figures you know can furnish no adequate conception. Young men, you scarcely remember those things. A young man once said to me: "I dimly remember how, when sitting by her side, my mother fainted away while she was reading the paper, and then my father was brought home dead from the war." And how many such homes and such experiences there were during those four dreadful years of the rebellion. And how great the contrast between then and now. Now when a single soldier of our Thirteenth Minnesota falls in battle we have his photograph in our daily journals. And what a cloud of sorrow would fall upon our State and community would only one-fourth or one-half of our regiment return. And after the news of every battle at Manilla how we scan the names of the killed and the wounded, hoping that the names of Clark, Hemphill, Cole and Cragie and others are not among them. And for noble young Whitaker, who fell in battle we have memorial words spoken in our Sabbath-school. But while the ones and the twos fall in this war the hundreds and the thousands and the tens of thousands fell in the same length of time in the Civil War. And how thankful we are to know that it is not so now.

But there was still another feature of the Civil War which no pen can describe, which no artist can depict, and

which in all its unutterable horror no imagination can conceive. And here we must let Belle Isle speak. Here we must let the walls of Libby prison and Saulsbury, and above all the stockade at Andersonville, tell the story of the suffering and the misery that were endured by the soldier of the Union. There within the walls of that single stockade were crowded together thirty-five thousand men. And there for long and weary months the brave Union soldier suffered, famished, died. There he lingered unsheltered from the burning rays of a hot southern sun by day and the drenching rain and the deadly malaria by night. Parched with thirst, maddened with hunger, eaten by gnawing worms which his wounds had engendered: with no bed but the hard ground, with no covering but the bending sky. And so these brave men died—died for the Union. During the single month of August, 1864, 2,990 bodies were put into the dead house previous to burial, an average of more than ninety-six every day. And during the latter part of the month the mortality was even greater than at first. The number of the dead being 110 a day, 120, 125, and 140 a day. And the history of the world furnishes no example of loyalty like that which was given by the suffering heroes in those prisons. The betrayal of the flag of the country under which they were captured would have released them in a moment. But of the 94,072 Union soldiers who were confined in Confederate prisons during the war, there were 94,049 that remained true and loyal to the Union and to the flag of their country. Through all that suffering, in all that hell and horror which the Union soldier had to endure, only twenty-three, it is said, betrayed the flag of their country. I repeat it, such loyalty to a nation's flag under like circumstances, if like dreadful circumstances there ever were, then such loyalty to a nation's flag was never heard of on the face of the earth before.

No wonder that with millions of others we now com-

memorate these memorial occasions for such men. No wonder we carve and then lift up the honored name of the Union soldier in lasting monuments of marble and bronze. No wonder we enshrine their memories in historic and beautiful chapels. No wonder we annually drop tears and plant flowers upon their graves. Yes, let the memorial of such loyalty go wherever the sun shines. Let it go wherever the winds of heaven blow; let the thunders roar it; let the lightnings flash it; let the whole earth reverberate it; let it be written upon every leaf that trembles in the forest; let the million stars that keep their nightly watch over the silent dust of the sleeping heroes, —let all these as they march on in their sublime courses proclaim that matchless model of loyalty on the part of the soldier for the American Union and the precious memory of these and their comrades in arms we commemorate to-day.

And we also trust that the patriotic fires that burned in the bosom of the fathers may be kindled as a perpetual flame in the hearts of the sons and daughters of those noble sires. And when these are all gone who so nobly defended the American Union, then will it specially become the young men and the young women of the future Republic to see that those who died for its perpetuity did not die in vain. It is yours, my young friends, to catch the spirit of the American girl who when passing through the tower of London with her English guide, who with an air of triumph pointed to a cannon with the remark, "there is a gun we took from you at the battle of Bunker Hill." "Yes," said the American girl, "you took the gun but we kept the hill." Yes, that was the spirit of '76, when it is said "our grandsires took their guns to meeting, each man equipped on Sunday morn with psalm-book, shot and power horn." At the battle of Springfield, New Jersey it is said that the wadding for the muskets gave out, when a minister that was in the army rushed to a neighboring church and returned with his arms and his

pockets full of Watts' version of the Psalms, and scattered them among tbe soldiers, exclaiming in his patriotic zeal, "Give them Watts boys! Boys, give them Watts!" And who can now say otherwise than that under the circumstances it was a good use to make of the Psalms of him who said, "Blessed be the Lord my strength, which teacheth my hands to war and my fingers to fight." And so these Psalms of David helped the bullets of the Revolution to start the songs of liberty and union we are still singing, and which we hope the generations following us will continue to sing while the world stands.

And according also to a pentecostal promise, "to them that are afar off" as well as to you and to your children, I believe I am an expansionist. As a nation we should not say "the door is shut." By reason of our form of government and our protestant Christianity under God this nation can do more to extend both a true freedom and a true religion to all the world than any one of the nations of Europe. And our mission and our possibilities should go hand in hand. Whilst I would not be as enthusiastically prophetic as the American who said, "I give you the United States, bounded on the north by the aurora borealis, on the south by the procession of the equinoxes, on the east by the primeval chaos, and on the west by the day of judgment." But by taking our manifest destiny into the account I would make the moderate prediction and say: Here's to the future American Republic, bounded on the north by the north pole, on the south by the south pole, on the east by the rising sun and on the west by the "going down thereof."

And may the work transmitted to the children be carried forward in the same spirit with that of the fathers. Then will we continue to have that for which the Grand Army of the Republic now stands. Then will we continue to have that which the stars and stripes signify. And that was also the flag of our fathers. Under its folds and by its inspiration they protected the infant

Republic more than a century ago. They loved that flag and we love it, and we will teach our children to love it. We put it upon our school houses and they will put it upon theirs, and so that banner of the free shall float over cottage and palace, over the common school and over the capital of the nation, over the living and over our patriotic dead. And the meaning of our American flag is this: A free school, free speech, a free press, an open Bible for all, and no union of church and state for any.

I want to leave with you also this sentiment. We give our hands and our hearts to God and to our country, —make a new consecration of both to-day.—One God, one country, one language, one flag and one only, the flag of the Union and that flag forever.

But now, friends, it will not be long before the graves of our patriotic dead will out-number the comrades still living. A chaplain says: "It was near midnight and the surgeons had been the rounds of duty in the hospital tent and for a moment all was quiet, when suddenly a young man—and before speechless by reason of a mortal wound —called out in a clear, distinct voice, "Here." A surgeon hastened to his side and asked what he wanted. His reply was, "They are calling the roll in heaven and I was answering to my name." He turned his head and was gone—gone to join the great army whose uniform is washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. And so, dear friends, in the great roll call of eternity and of heaven in that eternity may each one of you also be enabled to answer, Here, Here, Here. AMEN.

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